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*A VISIT  
TO  
THE LAND OF HUSS.*

*REV. A. MOODY STUART*

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A VISIT  
TO  
THE LAND OF HUSS.

BY  
REV. A. MOODY STUART.



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## CHAPTER I.

### OUR UNPAID DEBT TO BOHEMIA.

Record of Huss in Edinburgh—Protest of the Bohemian nobles—Medical missionary sent from Prague to St. Andrews—His martyrdom.

IN the Library of the University of Edinburgh there is a singularly interesting Bohemian document. It is the protest of the Diet of Bohemia in Prague to the Council of Constance against the burning of Huss and the imprisonment of Jerome, with portraits of both. It is signed or rather sealed by a hundred Bohemian nobles, the original seals being still appended; and is such an object of interest for Bohemia, that at the request of the municipal authorities a photograph of it was sent to Prague last summer. It is a remarkably vigorous and bold protest, and its high moral and religious tone is so striking in a document of State, that we translate its opening sentence:—

“Because truly, according to both natural and divine law and by the words of our Saviour, we are commanded, ‘whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even the same unto them;’ as also an elect vessel exclaims, ‘Love is the fulfilling of the law,’ and all the law is fulfilled in one word, ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself:’ Therefore, so far as in our power, by God’s help, having respect unto

this divine law for our dearest neighbour of good memory, Master John Huss, whom lately in the Council of Constance (moved by we know not what spirit)—not confessing, not lawfully convicted, and by no proved errors and heresies—you have condemned, and delivered over unto a cruel and most shameful death."

At a time when preaching was rare, Huss proclaimed the gospel in his native tongue to prince and peasant, in the stately church and on the open highway. He preached fearlessly against the vices of the nobles, and the priests applauded him; but when in turn he preached with equal faithfulness against their own vices, the priests dragged him to the stake. But now the nobles having been turned from the error of their ways through his word, thus boldly and tenderly testify their affection to him as their most beloved friend.

After this earliest rent in the midnight cloud of mediæval Popery, by the preaching and martyrdom of Huss, the first "beloved physician," who was sent and ran to bear the glad tidings of the gospel light, was "ane man of Bœum named Paul Craw," the noble forerunner of modern medical missions, which he was honoured to seal with his blood. The cruel deaths of Huss and Jerome, and the subsequent sufferings in Bohemia, did not prevent Christ's witnesses there from thinking on other lands that were still sitting under the shadow of death. Bohemia had got light from England, for Huss and Jerome owed much to the writings of Wycliffe; but the Bohemians would appear to have selected Scotland for a mission field, as we might now Japan, on account of its extreme want, with a full knowledge of the difficulty and danger of the enterprise.

At this date there was not a single known Scottish witness for Christ. In 1407 a confessor was burned at Perth for affirming that the Pope was not the vicar of Christ, and that

no man of wicked life could be Pope. But he was an English presbyter, James Resby, a preacher of the cross, hated by the priests, but listened to by crowds, for "the common people heard him gladly." In other parts of the country there were Lollards from England; and in 1420 a martyr suffered in Glasgow, but he also was a stranger, or a man unknown, whose name could not be found in the registers. England was sending men to teach us; but in our zeal for Rome we burned them at the stake.

Taught by such examples, but not deterred, the Bohemians sent us a skilful physician named Paul Craw, or Crawar (a name still found in Bohemia), to try if the healing of our families might open the way for the gospel; yet a man fully prepared for our sakes to follow those who had gone before him through the gates of death. Coming to St. Andrews, in fulfilling his mission, he did not merely teach his patients, but "preached the heresies of Huss and Wycliffe;" which would almost seem to imply that he had taken some degree in divinity, or belonged to an ecclesiastical order, because it is only the heresy, and not the preaching, that is laid to his charge. But his coming to Scotland was in a medical character, with letters from Prague attesting his great excellence in his profession.

How long he remained, and with what spiritual success, is not recorded. But that he obtained some distinction as a teacher and preacher is evident from the designation of "arch-heretic" applied to him in the Scottish chronicles; that he had lived in St. Andrews for a considerable time, is implied in the expression, "at last he was brought afore the theologues;" and there can be little doubt that the good seed he had been diligently sowing was not only taking root for coming generations, but was springing up around him in living disciples of Jesus. The charges preferred against him

were touching the worship of saints, auricular confession, and "the sacrament of the altar," which would have special reference to the Cup, for which Bohemia had been contending even before the days of Huss. He was found by his examiners well versed in theology, skilled and prompt in the quotation of Scripture, but obstinate in the doctrines of Huss and Wycliffe. A worthy follower of that "generous and intrepid martyr and confessor of Christ," as Luther calls Huss, Crawar had made up his mind to hazard his life for the sake of a foreign nation who might only requite his love with hatred. In the hope of saving our souls by first winning our hearts, he had exercised his medical skill on our behalf; but when he was at last apprehended in 1432, and examined concerning his creed and his objects, he made no secret of either; but boldly confessed the truth as it is in Jesus, and frankly stated that "he was sent out of Bœum to preach to the Scotch" the way of everlasting life.

His were the first martyr fires lighted in St. Andrews. The seed sown in the blood of the stranger seemed to be slow of taking root in our native soil; yet it was ever springing up from time to time, till straightway our own men, Patrick Hamilton and George Wishart, followed the noble Bohemian to the stake, and the latter to end waved with a rich harvest.

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## CHAPTER II.

### A SURVEY OF THE GROSSER RING IN PRAGUE.

The Grosser Ring—The forty-seven martyrs—Baron Budowa—Provocation to good works—Roman Catholic preaching and hearing.

"I HAVE just been visiting the church where Huss the martyr preached," said an American gentleman to me in Prague, soon after our arrival in the picturesque capital of Bohemia: "I expect that in America we are soon to have a great conflict with Popery, and I wish to prepare myself for it." To my own duller imagination the place of the martyr's preaching was too distant from the scene of his noble death to present a vivid picture of his sufferings; and I walked down alone to a scene of actual martyrdom, two hundred years later, in the large square of the Grosser Ring, the Grassmarket of Prague, where the scaffold covered with black was erected, on which forty-seven Bohemian noblemen and leading citizens sealed their faith with their blood on the 21st of June 1621. These were not, indeed, mere confessors like Huss, but patriots like our Scottish Covenanters, and more liable to be led into a mistaken course in their more complicated path. In the case of some, however, who suffered in the sequel of that day of blood, there mingled no civil element whatever, as with Matthaos Ulizky, who used to say that "tears were the only weapons of the Church," and disapproved of taking up arms in its behalf. When he

had first been stretched on the rack one day after another in the vain effort to induce him to apostatize, or to renounce to man the ministry he had received from God, he ascended the scaffold with the exclamation, "To-day my soul shall be with Christ;" but before laying his head on the block, he was ordered to stretch out his right hand beneath the sword, because it had so often held forth the Cup at the communion-table. A martyr right hand struck off in a noble confession !

In the case of the others, with whatever deduction for the civil mixed with the sacred, those sufferers in Prague were faithful, single-hearted men, and true martyrs of Jesus Christ. They had trusted in the amnesty held out by the Emperor ; he is said to have passed a sleepless night at the thought of breaking it ; and it was only after his confessor, solemnly adjured, had taken the responsibility on himself, that he delivered them over to death in the Grosser Ring. As my American friend went to the church of Huss, so I walked alone round and across that Ring, seeking to recall the sad yet magnificent spectacle. An instant stroke of the axe for the sake of Christ, when the soul is assured of heaven, did not seem so formidable ; and I could even envy the owner of that right hand which had the singular honour of being cut off for having held forth the cup of salvation. But oh, this tender flesh and blood, nourished in these quiet times, shrunk from torture even for the gospel ; from the uprooting of the tongue before execution, as in one of those noble confessors, or in another the nailing of it living to the gallows-tree.

But the Grosser Ring recalled other and more pleasing associations with that memorable day of blood. The prisoners having spent the whole night in prayer, singing of psalms, and mutual consolation, washed themselves, and put on their knightly robes as for a marriage-feast. The clock struck five,

the gun sounded from the castle, and they walked forth with alacrity and joy, encircled by soldiers, and by a vast crowd full of intense sympathy, and singing the 44th Psalm, "For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." Those who first ascended the scaffold addressed those that were left: "We go before you to behold the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Follow us, that we may together see our Father's face. The grief of this hour will pass, but the joy of heaven will endure for ever." They replied: "May the Lord Jesus Christ send his holy angels to meet you! Hasten before us to our Father's house: we follow you, and we shall soon meet in the heavenly glory."

The most distinguished of all the forty-seven was the Baron Wenzel of Budowa, who has been called "the last of the Bohemians," and who said, "I will rather die than see my country die." Rank, learning, eloquence, zeal for the glory of God, and love for the salvation of souls, combined to render him an object of love and honour to the people; while his large estates, his beloved family, and his advanced years led them to conceive that the death of a criminal would be to him a singularly trying sacrifice; and the report spread abroad that he had died of grief. To a friend who visited the prison to inquire if he was still in life, he said with a smile, "I trust no man will ever live to say that Budowa died of grief;" and holding out the Bible that was in his hand, he said, "See my Paradise! it has never yielded me such heavenly food as now." The night before his execution, when two Jesuits respectfully offered their help for the salvation of his soul, he replied: "Dear fathers, will you help my soul to salvation? I wish your souls were as certain as I am through Jesus Christ!" True to the dark and doubtful faith of Rome, one of the priests answered, "My Lord had



better not boast of his salvation, for the Scripture saith that no man in this life knows whether he lives in the grace of God or in wrath." Budowa replied, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness—" The priest interrupted, "*That* the apostle says of himself, and not of others;" but Budowa resumed, "That is not true, for does he not immediately add, 'And not for me only, but for all them also that love his appearing'? go then, and leave me in peace." He stepped upon the scaffold in an ecstasy of joy, and as he bowed his head on the block he laid his hands upon his white locks and flowing beard, saying, "Soon will these grey hairs be brought to glory, for the martyr's crown will adorn them."

This persecution was 250 years ago; for more than 150 years following the gospel was rigorously suppressed throughout Bohemia. The liberty granted after that was welcomed as an unspeakable boon, but was strictly limited, and full religious freedom has been enjoyed only for the last two years. At first it was scarcely realized by the Protestant pastors, and it was only after Senior Yanata and Pastor Schubert visited this country in 1868, and saw what was doing here, that they found impulse and boldness to go forward through the door that had been opened for them.

In the midst of religious and benevolent work of every kind in this country, we are apt to forget how we stood ourselves at the beginning of the century, and what we may still expect in less privileged lands. In visiting Hungary on our way to Bohemia, one of the Professors in Pesth, who had studied for a year in Scotland, told me that he had lately been enabled to heal a family breach of many years' standing. The parties at variance were previously unknown to him, and

each of them separately asked him with surprise what could have induced him to take an interest in their welfare, as they had no claim on him, and could see no adequate motive. His answer was, "*Everybody in Scotland cares for everybody else.* My landlady in Edinburgh was a poor woman; and she taught a Sabbath-school every Sabbath afternoon purely from love for the children." A Roman Catholic lady also, who had been disappointed in her desire to meet us, wrote to me in the warmest terms about the Scotch as "a nation who busied themselves with doing good to others;" and a Hungarian periodical sent to us had printed in English the words "What it is to do good" as a lesson which they desired to learn from this country. We would that such commendations were more literally true, but we should not neglect this influence on behalf of nations less favoured than ourselves.

During our stay in Bohemia we met with Roman Catholics turning from Popery, but we were not present at any Roman Catholic service; on our way home, however, we took the opportunity on a week-day evening of entering a church dedicated to the Immaculate Virgin, and there we formed some idea of what we believe to be the present state of many Roman Catholics in Bohemia. We did not hear the prayers, but we were told that in Bohemia, after the Latin prayers were ended, any member of the church might have the Lord's Prayer repeated in his own tongue by paying threepence to the priest. The sermon was just beginning as we entered; it was in the language of the people; and after their work they were flocking in to hear it, an earnest congregation of men and women. When we preach, the first and last and midst of our sermon is the Word of God. Our whole object is to bring the people to his Word, our one effort to throw light upon it, and our end is gained only when that Word is fastened in their hearts as a nail in a sure place.

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But here it was not only different, but absolutely the reverse. The sermon itself was animated and searching; its subject was the root of evil in the heart; so far as it went, its teaching was clear, and its illustration extremely interesting. The preacher failed to convey the impression that his own conscience was touched by the truths he uttered, or his heart moved by his own appeals, yet he was thoroughly bent on interesting and awakening his hearers. As he advanced and opened the hidden evils of the heart, he riveted and moved them in a manner very seldom seen amongst us; but, so long as I heard, he threw no ray of light on the way of escape. The one portion of the sermon that was helpful to me, was when he uttered, not his own words, but the words of the living God, which flowed as cold water to my thirsty soul. But for his poor people, whose faces told that their hearts were sore athirst, there was "water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink." The shepherd brought the weary sheep to the fountain, and before their eyes he rolled a stone on the well's mouth. When he saw them pierced through with the arrows of conviction, he cried aloud in Latin, "*Averte oculos meos a vanitate: in via tua vivifica me*" (Turn away mine eyes from vanity: in thy way quicken thou me). There was help, strength, life in the words, but they were the words of the living God shut close under the seal of a dead tongue.

To the general earnestness there was one exception, making it more marked. The congregation around me at first was composed not of the very poorest class, but apparently of shopmen and tradesmen hungering for a portion of the bread of life after the work of the day, and of women like young mothers of families as if they had hastily left their household cares for more urgent and nobler interests; but there were none with the aspect of wealth. Afterwards, a lady with the air of wealthy citizenship took a chair beside me. During

the sermon the beadle passed through with his long rod, and compelled my attention, for he seemed as if coming to apply for a gratuity or offering; but he passed all the others and myself till he reached the lady in silk beyond me. He tapped her respectfully on the shoulder; she understood his errand, took out a purse stuffed with notes and coins far more than it was made for, and gave him one of the pieces. She then composed herself anew and listened to the sermon with an air of satisfaction that seemed to say, "It is not for me to vex myself about those weeds that choke the soul: I can pay my way well, both for this world and the next; but it is proper to attend to the sermon." She looked now the poorest in the circle, for how hardly shall they that have riches enter the kingdom of heaven; yet here, alas! we could not add that "to the poor the gospel was preached."

But this was the only exception that I observed in the general eagerness for the words of the preacher, and the countenances of some of the listeners are still engraved in my memory. There was first the look of attention, then of interest, then of earnestness, and at last in some a look of agony, as if they would cry aloud, "What shall we do to be saved?" We could not but sigh, "Oh for such a congregation at home, or for five minutes here to read the words of life and healing to those broken hearts!" Yet notwithstanding the unfaithfulness of the priesthood, we doubt not that the Lord is leading souls to himself through what they see and hear even in that corrupt Church; but it would surely be life from the dead to multitudes, if salvation through grace were preached to men who are not resting under the woe of being "at ease in Zion."

## CHAPTER III.

### THE BOOK AND THE CUP.

The Cup the Protestant symbol everywhere—Cup dug up from an ancient battle-field—John Huss—John Nepomuk—Hussitism—Dying for the Cup

should hold that the remission of sins is the chief fruit of the Lord's Supper. The contest was therefore not merely for a scriptural institution, but for the free forgiveness of sin which the institution proclaimed.

That Cup, for which a noble army of martyrs cheerfully shed their blood, because it set forth and sealed the one precious blood that was shed for them, is the Bohemian symbol of the Protestant faith. If you enter a church, whether in the heart of the picturesque capital or in the outskirts of a remote village, you see the Cup cut in stone on the centre of its principal wall; and the Bible and the Cup carved in wood form the most conspicuous ornament of the pulpit. If you visit a school, you are assured of its character afar off by the symbol of the Cup in the centre of the wall over the door. The resting-place of the dead is adorned with cups of stone; the Cup surmounts each pillar of the gateway, and in some churchyards nearly every tombstone has the Cup for its chief device, either carved on the surface, or more commonly, in its full round form, as the crowning ornament of the tomb. Even spots not sacred occasionally bear the beloved emblem; and the gateway of the farm-steading may be seen with a massive cup planted on the key-stone of the arch.

The ancient battle-field discloses among its buried treasures, not the mere imitative form, but the Communion Cup itself, that had been consecrated at the table of the Lord. In the civil wars for the preservation of the faith once delivered to the saints, the Cup was the Hussite ensign of battle; but the Cup itself also, with the bread and the wine, was carried into the field, and before the battle the minister rode through the ranks and administered the sacrament in both kinds to every soldier: "a table prepared in the presence of their enemies." In an old battle-field, where the Bohemians fought and died two hundred years before our Covenanters, they dug up a few

years ago, nine feet below the surface, the silver spurs of a soldier of rank, and beside them a silver cup with the fragments of a glass flask for the sacramental wine. These relics, exhumed after four hundred years, were shown to us at Kolin, where the cup is now used in the church of Mr. Dusek, one of the young men who studied in Scotland. During the past year not fewer than eighty Roman Catholics have been admitted into this new congregation, in their simple meeting-place, to drink the communion wine from that same cup out of which it had been drunk of old by men who were sealing their testimony against Rome with their blood. If the emblematic device was a symbol of the true faith, the recent disinterring of this ancient cup from its deep sepulchre is in singular and beautiful harmony with the present resurrection from the dead of the Protestant faith in Bohemia.

trary relation, has a certain prominence in Bohemia. In the entrance to the Dom, or Cathedral, at Prague, where last of all the name of Huss would be recorded, there is an old inscription bearing that all Bohemia is summed up in three names of John. The most cherished of the three is the name of St. John Nepomuk, whose body is entombed in the Dom, within a shrine of solid silver, which is marvellous for the enormous mass of the precious metal, said to weigh thirty-seven hundredweight. According to Roman Catholic tradition, this John was put to death by King Wenceslaus in the boyhood of Huss, for refusing to disclose a secret which the queen had confided to him in confession; he was long after canonized as a saint by Rome; and the Roman Catholic priesthood and nation glory in his miserable martyrdom, more fitted to demoralize than to elevate a people. Holy man he probably was, if the tradition about his death is true. He is to be respected for his constancy in enduring torture and dying in a wrong cause rather than offend his conscience, and his mistaken zeal would find forgiveness through the great Ransom. But while the king sinned against the saint in subjecting him to torture and putting him to death, the saint had first sinned against the king in accepting a secret which the queen would neither disclose herself nor suffer him to disclose to her own husband; and the great Romish saint of Bohemia died a martyr for the life-poisoning rites of the confessional. He is said to have been drowned secretly in the river; but flames, counted miraculous, hovering over the water led to the discovery of the body; and a cross on the parapet of the bridge, with five stars representing those flames, marks the spot beneath. One conjectures that in these stars is the original of the "Blue Star" frequently met with in Bohemia, as in the sign of the "Hotel de l'Etoile bleu," which is puzzling to a traveller; for



a star painted blue is no natural representation of a golden star in the blue heavens. But in the cathedral there are large stars of dark blue glass or stone near Nepomuk's silver shrine, and these may represent the lambent blue light on the water, from the saint's decomposing body, whose flickering is said to have led to the discovery of his death. What a contrast this self-imposed martyrdom of John Nepomuk for the credit of the vile confessional, to the martyrdom of John Huss, thirty years later, for the truth as it is in Jesus ; and the misty Blue Stars which commemorate the one, to the hallowed Cup for which the other died, and with which his name is honourably linked for ever !

But there is a national as well as a Protestant character in Huss, which is of unspeakable advantage for removing prejudice in a time of reviving faith, for he was strongly Bohemian both in his feelings and in his actions. He preached and wrote in the Czech language, and is looked upon as the founder of its literature. When he found the German students in Prague opposed to the gospel, he got the constitution of the University altered, so as to give a majority of votes to the Bohemian students, who were more open to the truth. This Bohemian feature in his character does not conciliate either the priesthood or their more bigoted followers, but it tells on a large portion of the population. His holy heroism, also, has an irresistible natural charm. In some of the German prints representing the Reformers, with Luther seated as the great central figure, and Calvin and the rest around him, Huss stands among them designed as the "Hero of the Reformation ;" and it is hard to refrain from loving the self-forgetfulness of the martyr who could look on an old man bringing another fagot with religious zeal to his funeral pile, and say with a smile, "O holy simplicity !" Not less telling for them is the fact of his never having renounced

the Church of Rome, even when it fastened him to the stake. His protest against withholding the Cup from the people is one in which many of the Roman Catholics are ready to join. A young gentleman in one of the trains told us that he had been brought up a Roman Catholic, and had not renounced that Communion, although he attended Protestant churches ; but that he was a Hussite, and that there was much Hussitism among the Roman Catholics. A clergyman in Prague informed me that the Czech Roman Catholic newspapers are openly demanding the restoration of the Cup for the people, the abrogation of the celibacy of the clergy, and the abolition of the convents ; and he added, that if the present liberty continued, it was impossible to foresee the change that might take place in two years in the Roman Catholic population.

Although these demands are all touching points of discipline, and not articles of faith, the Church of Rome could scarcely concede them without suffering a shock in her whole system. But without an earnest Protestantism, superstition will only give place to infidelity. The imprisonment of the nun Barbara, at Cracow, was creating a great sensation in Prague ; and in Pesth we found a print-shop besieged with applicants for a picture of the prisoner in her dismal cell. In Bohemia the Protestant population is relatively small, only two or three to a hundred Roman Catholics ; but this is the crushed and once all but extinguished remnant of the Reformation. Many of the Roman Catholics who surround them are descendants of ancestors who suffered and died for the truth ; and the prayers of the fathers may be returning now in a blessing on the children. The Protestants have already had their commemoration of Huss, and the Roman Catholics are now (September 1869) holding one for themselves at his birthplace on the five-hundredth anniversary of his birth, remembering him as a Bohemian, not as a Pro-

testant martyr. The priests have forbidden this commemoration, yet the Hussite Cup is no heretical symbol in the eyes of many of their people, who would rejoice in the permission

silent circling round the worshippers was followed by a song of triumphant praise which the fear of the lurking foe could not hush.

May the Book and the Cup unite these two lands in bonds of brotherhood in this hour, when Bohemia, trodden under foot for centuries, is rising again out of the martyrs' graves, and asks our hands to help to loose the grave-clothes. The Lord is remembering mercy toward her, "like as a father pitying his children;" and she is calling us to come with her to the help of the Lord against the mighty. The Book and the Cup have been ours and our fathers', to read without faltering and to drink without fear; but it is possible that we may be enabled to hand them down to our children only through another baptism of blood. The "woman drunk with the blood of saints" is intoxicating not a few of our nobles and our people with her maddening wine-cup; and by a dark and portentous coincidence, increase of power in the State has long been simultaneous with this growing thralldom over the hearts of many. Our country, once freed through a great cost of blood, is step by step with a false generosity "giving power unto the beast" again; strangely forgetting that, as soon as the balance of power in these kingdoms turns in favour of Rome, the Book will be sealed anew and the Cup withdrawn. Our last conflict will, we trust, be only "one hour with the beast;" but like our Bohemian brethren we must hold ourselves ready to die for the Book and for the Cup, that, if taken away in judgment, they may soon be restored in mercy. Meanwhile let us stretch forth liberal hands to help those brethren, who are both few and poor, in this day of their merciful visitation; as not knowing either how soon or how much we may ourselves need the help both of heaven and of earth, of the all-pitiful Saviour above and of his sympathizing Church below.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE POWER OF THE PRIESTHOOD SHAKEN.

How priests interpret laws—Liberty to become Protestant without appearing before the priest—Freedom from the whip—The Sabbath much, but Money more.

“SIX weeks are forty-two days” is a little leaf from the poison-juice of the great lie which flows through Popery as its life-sap, through root, stem, and branch, bud, leaf, and fruit of that “mystery of iniquity.” In more recent times the iron yoke of Rome in Bohemia was lightened, and a Roman Catholic was legally allowed to change his communion and join the Protestant Church. But this indulgence was granted on condition that the convert should go through a course of six weeks’ instruction by the priest whose fold he was about to leave. To favour Rome to the utmost, the State assigned this month and a half as affording full opportunity to ascertain that the change was deliberate, and giving ample time for the priest to explain the doctrine of both Churches, and to use all his influence over the fears and affections of

priests not to consist of a continuous month and a half, but of forty-two separate days, and, if need be, of all the individual hours that made up those days. The convert visited the priest, who conversed with him for an hour, and said at the close of the conversation, Return again in a month. He returned at the time appointed, and having received further instruction, was directed to come back after another month, or two months, according to the caprice of the priest, who kept him waiting wearily with the residue of the forty-two days in store, in hope of exhausting his patience at last.

This grave libel against the priesthood is not given on the evidence of hearsay. We had it in her own house from the lips of a lady who had herself gone through the process. She had been a Roman Catholic, but had embraced the Protestant faith, and desired to become a member of the Reformed Church. Of necessity she went to her priest, who put her under such a course of instruction, deferring her from month to month, and from one year to another. At last, seeing no hope of a termination, her husband insisted that the endless process should be brought to a close. The priest then ordered her to attend in church, denounced her before all the congregation, and brought his fierce malediction upon her to a climax with the words, "It had been good for you if your mother had thrown you into the jaws of the wolf as soon as you were born." But as "the bird by wandering and the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless does not come:" the priestly anathema wrought no fear, its thunder was followed by no lightning-stroke, and the Christian lady sits freely at the table of the Lord, trusting in the one High Priest who came not to curse but to bless, eating of the bread and drinking of the cup that is blessed in his name.

But in the last two years everything is changed. The tyrannical yoke of the priesthood is broken for the present ;

the Lord grant that it may be for ever. In one town which we visited, the Protestant minister told us that on the previous day he had admitted two Catholics into his church, and that, so far as any interference from without was concerned, the process is now sufficiently brief. There was no need to consult the priest, or even to inform him. The whole transaction, from its commencement to its close, was completed in a few minutes, simply by the minister going to the police-court, desiring that these two names in the Register should be transferred to his communion-roll, and seeing it

and are heavy laden." She answered, with tears in her eyes, "But I am one of the accursed ones; I am under the ban of the priests." Both husband and wife seemed to stand in need of prayer to be enabled at once "to count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ."

It was impossible not to be touched with tender pity for this young wife clinging to her husband's side and saying, "But I am one of the accursed ones." Yet any present trial seemed light beside the memory of the past, brought before us by the next town that we visited. It contained a large population, and as we drove through its streets we remarked the wide open space of the market-cross. A refined and Christian lady told us afterwards, "In that market-cross my great-grandmother was publicly whipped for the name of Jesus." She did not state what the offence was, but it could hardly have been of a very public character, because it was her own husband that informed against her; probably either for meeting with two or three in the name of Christ, or for reading the Word of God. He afterwards relented, and obtained her release from prison by giving corn and other presents to the Jesuits. A lady stripped and scourged in the public market, before her own accusing husband, in the midst of a mocking crowd, for her simple following of Jesus Christ! My flesh shrank at the memory of the deed, and at the thought of having passed over the spot where that gentle blood had flowed under the stroke of the hangman's lash. Yet this is not worthy to be named with the sufferings of the Holy One, before whom the angels veil their faces with their wings, when he said, "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting." O my crucified God! what hast thou not endured for her, for me, for many, when the



ploughers ploughed upon thy back, and made long their furrows, that by thy stripes we might be healed ! Give us, Lord, the like grace with those confessors of thy truth, that of us also it may be written, "They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death."

## CHAPTER V.

### LAMPS NEEDED IN A DARK LAND.

Friends in Britain interested in Bohemia—Want of a Theological College—  
Preaching among the tombs—Churches only in the villages, none in the  
towns—Silver mines the martyrs' graves.

OUR party in Bohemia consisted of Mr. Wilson of the Barclay Church and myself, from Scotland ; our excellent missionary to the Jews, Mr. Van Andel ; Mr. Abraham Herschell, from London ; and Dr. Blackwood, rector of Middleton Tyas, who joined us in Prague, and formed a great acquisition to our strength, as he has for years taken a deep interest in Bohemia. Our little company thus represented the Episcopal and Nonconformist Churches of England, as well as the Free Church of Scotland ; and combined all the parties in this country who have, quite independently of each other, been for some years taking a special interest in Bohemia, with the exception of the Glasgow Society of various denominations for assisting the Bohemian Churches, originated by the zeal and liberality of Mrs. Crum. Their object is the same as ours, and if our plans had been more preconcerted, we might have arranged to have them also represented. But as far as we were concerned, our meeting with Dr. Blackwood and his family was accidental in the hotel at Prague, although he had timed his visit with the view of meeting us. Afterwards, in the remoter parts of the country, my fellow-travelers were Mr. Herschell and Mr. Wilson.

Our Bohemian guides and generous hosts were the two

theological reading must in any case be German; yet, besides other evils attending their present dependent position, it is felt to be a great disadvantage on their return home from foreign colleges to have in some measure to re-learn the fluent use of their mother-tongue. The establishment of such an Institution is a weighty undertaking, involving serious subjects for consideration, and requiring Government sanction. But it is, more perhaps than any other, an object to be desired, if the requisite means and the right men can be procured, and if the whole be placed on a thoroughly sound foundation.

One of the chief arguments against such an undertaking is that the Czech language, like our own Gaelic, must gradually die out. But there is a vast difference between the tens of thousands of Celts in our Highlands and the five millions of Czechs in Bohemia. The language of so great a nation must endure for a long time to come. The necessity also for a ministry trained in the country is increased by the character of the language, which could be mastered by earnest missionaries, but is difficult to acquire, although the difficulty is probably greater for the Germans than the Scotch; for our missionaries find that they can acquire the Hungarian, and probably also the Bohemian, more easily than Germans can, because some of the sounds are more allied to our own. If, notwithstanding the great poverty of the pastors, such an institution will increase their number, no effort should be spared in its behalf. On our return we made a long circuit to Herrnhut, in the hope of procuring preachers there. But we were unsuccessful, and were told that the want of labourers was felt everywhere: the harvest everywhere great, the labourers everywhere few; the Lord of the harvest to be therefore supplicated to send forth labourers into his harvest.

While the value of our own religious privileges was enhanced by spiritual want of every kind around us, the value of our British Sabbath was brought out in the case of a fellow-traveller, with whom I had a great deal of conversation, as we had the carriage to ourselves for a large portion of a long day. My interest in him was specially awakened because he was too evidently, if not rapidly, exhausting a noble life for the miserable husks of earth. He was over thirty years of age, of spare form and attractive appearance, with a quick pulse, and frame highly strung, seldom sleeping above four hours, and caring little for indulgence of any kind; considerate and benevolent; refined in sentiment, and acute in intellect; devoting all his energies to an apparently large and prosperous business, yet enjoying literature, scenery, and objects of taste. He spoke eight languages, including Hungarian, but he said that Czech was beyond comparison the most difficult of them all. After travelling nearly sixteen hours, and arriving at my destination late at night, I was thankful in the prospect of rest, but he was to journey on, traversing a vast extent of country, and one kingdom after another. It was Friday, and he was to sleep only in the train till the Tuesday night, travelling night and day without intermission, with the exception of an hour or two for business in some of the capital cities through which he was to pass.

He spoke with boundless enthusiasm of England where he had often been, and also of Scotland which he had visited. On my first mention of the name of England, he rose up in the carriage and took off his hat, with the words, "I always take off my hat to England; I love and honour England as a land of liberty, and a land where ghostly energy of every kind is honoured and rewarded quite apart from the accident of birth." I assented, but added that our Sabbath was among

our greatest blessings, and a chief source of all the rest. He replied, "Yes, in England you give one day in the week for pure and noble thought, and it is that that has made you a great nation." I suggested that it would be good for himself to rest on the coming Sabbath, and not wear out his life with incessant toil seven days in the week. He answered, "Yes, but the Germans will do anything for money—we *must* have money." The song of the bondwoman to ceaseless toil, "Stitch, stitch, stitch," sounded to me less sad than the voice of the willing slave of lucre—Drive, drive, drive, gold and silver and brass; on, on, on, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. A noble, immortal life, self-sold in exchange for the gold that perisheth; microscopic gain for infinite loss!

"Bohemia is a heap of dry wood," said an intelligent and devoted Moravian minister to me, in answer to my inquiry into its condition at the present hour; "it is a heap of dry wood, and needs only a light to kindle it. If not neglected, the whole land might be filled with the gospel in five years." Not labouring there himself, he had no personal object in view; but he had been educated at Herrnhut, and was familiar with the past and present state of the country. In Bohemia he included the adjoining region of Moravia, which also presents a large and important field, and under the same ecclesiastical system; but we could not attempt to visit it. The population of Bohemia is 5,000,000; and of Moravia 2,000,000. The number of Reformed congregations in Moravia is twenty; it has less of the Czech and more of the German language. In Bohemia there are forty-two parishes of the Reformed Church, a parish extending perhaps over thirty or forty miles, and embracing all the scattered Protestants in many Roman Catholic parishes; the Protestants forming perhaps a thirtieth part of the population. About a fourth part of the forty-two ministers of those Bohemian

parishes came to meet us in Prague, and we obtained a good deal of information from them.

But the ideas we thus formed we found to be faint and vague, when we had seen for ourselves by going through several large districts of the country. We visited thirteen or fourteen churches or stations, for it is not always easy to define what forms a station. One of those we visited was only a churchyard, having the grave-digger's house within it, with stone cups on the pillars of the gate, and enclosed with an excellent wall. The minister of the district, with a fitter place of assembly, would no doubt have a good congregation. Yet, meanwhile, this graveyard is not only a solemn, but in all respects a select spot for an open-air service. He could not preach legally in the open field outside; but the resting-place of the dead is privileged ground, and at the funerals of his widely-scattered flock he preaches to large congregations of Roman Catholics, who thus learn among the dead the way of everlasting life. This churchyard, however, is not only outside as regards the weather, but also outside of the town; and to gather a real church he must of necessity have some house of meeting.

At another place a number of young people assembled in the church to meet us, and we felt interested in addressing them, from their marked interest in listening. At a third we were rather hurried, for when done we had to run to catch the train: a rare occurrence in those parts, where time is dealt out with less parsimony than with us, usually leaving an hour or two to spare, and teaching us that in our sharp appreciation of half-minutes we are apt to forget that there is also some value in an hour of vacancy. Yet our unusual haste after the close did not mar our enjoyment of the meeting, in which from twenty to thirty men had gathered to welcome us in our Master's name; a handsome young Jew, with his

black hair and dark eyes, standing within the door an earnest listener.

But most of our meetings were of a more limited character, and always reminded us of the words, "From Miletus Paul sent for the elders of the church." Once a shrewd elderly matron conversed with us at the close; but for the most part the company consisted of ten or twelve men, some of them elders, others the most earnest members of a church which they were cherishing into formal existence; quite like respectable working men in our own country parishes. We saw what a single man may do, in the case of a church rising within the last year to five or six hundred hearers; but it had been nursed for twenty years before by one man sedulously keeping a few live coals together. The peculiarity of these new churches, formed or in hope of formation, is that they are for the most part in towns of from five to ten thousand inhabitants. When the rigorous oppression of the Protestant faith ceased, and permission was granted to build churches, the privilege was withheld from the towns, and the churches were sanctioned only in the outskirts of small villages. You meet, therefore, the strange but constant sight of the Protestant church and manse in a mere hamlet, while the town of the district is five or ten miles off without any place of meeting whatever. This was not because there were no Protestants in the towns, but for the purpose of discouraging them to the utmost, and of gradually making the centres of population completely Popish. A sad sight it is to visit town after town in Popish darkness, and with no candlestick holding forth the light of the Lamb of God.

It is this state of matters that has now to be met by planting Protestant churches in all the towns of the land, for which there is not only perfect liberty, but singular encouragement. In one town of fifteen thousand souls, which the Pro-



testant pastor of the district visited, but with no place to preach in, the Roman Catholic mayor gave him the town-hall, and it was filled with Roman Catholic hearers. In another place where some Protestant soldiers were located in the late war, the rabbi gave them the synagogue to worship in. But the tendency of the oppressive weight under which they have long been crushed, is to cause either despondency and inaction, or much slowness and hesitancy in proceeding. Hitherto every step has been so difficult, so tedious, often so impossible, that even when the way is open, the opportunity is apt to be slowly realized and used. This seemed to be the case in the town where the young merchant's wife wept because she was under the curse of the priests. The eight or ten men whom we met there appeared to feel themselves hemmed in by the priesthood on every side; and they required to be stimulated to go forward and find a place of meeting, in which doubtless many Roman Catholics would soon join them. But where even one or two men of energy have taken the lead, the success has been marvellous.

Intermediate between desponding delay and successful energy is an important case, in which the prompt assistance of Christian friends will be invaluable. It is in the town to which I have referred as the former scene of scourging for the sake of Christ. In speaking of that Christian lady's imprisonment and stripes, I should have explained that one of the old expedients for suppressing the gospel in Bohemia was to bring its confessors out of their prisons from time to time and scourge them through the streets.

This town must have been enlightened with the preaching of the gospel, both long before, and many years after our own Reformation. But for the last two hundred and fifty years, so far as I am aware, there has been no open testimony for the name of Jesus, except the suffering of his saints,

when in them Christ was crucified afresh and put to an open shame.

At present there is no place of meeting, except a private room capable of holding a little company of twenty or thirty. There is intelligence, desire, hope in the elders, with some need of impulse, but more need of help. We found them in exactly the same position in which they were represented to us as having been a year ago ; and without some aid from without, another year may find them no further advanced. They are most desirous of possessing a church, or rather some place for meeting, but their difficulties are great. It is impossible for them to rent any place, because the priests either hinder them from obtaining it at all ; or, if the owner's consent has been obtained, they have such influence, if not with himself yet with some member of his family, and use it with such perseverance, that the consent is sure to be withdrawn ; and a lease would thus also soon be broken. The only mode is purchase, and that promptly ; but the people are poor, and have not the means. One of their number whom we met, an intelligent tradesman, and recently a Romanist, said to them last year, " I have saved 800 florins, and make you welcome to the loan of them, if you will go forward." But they thought themselves unable, for the purchase of a suitable place would require about four times that sum, or £300. If they had half the price, or £150, they could buy a house at once, leaving the remainder on the property, and paying it off gradually. This case is so important and so urgent, that we engaged to get £50 for them, for which they were extremely grateful ; and we hope that by generous friends in England and Scotland the whole sum needed may quickly be cast into the Lord's treasury, so that the precious opportunity may not be lost. At present they cannot rent a house, and it may soon be made difficult for them to purchase one.

This representation was written last year after our return. Through the kindness of Christian friends we have been enabled to send them twice the amount of our promise; and they have now bought a house for themselves.

doubtless as well as mothers in Israel ; convicted of no sin except touching the Book and the Cup, of reading the Book of Life and of drinking the Cup of Salvation ; and numbering in all 4329, they were cast headlong into the yawning pits.

For two hundred years, till the Reformation was finally quenched in 1621, those martyrs were remembered every 18th of April by a solemn meeting in a chapel erected on the spot to their memory. " And I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held : and they cried with a loud voice saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth ? And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory ; and he cried, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." In that day when the Lord shall make up his jewels, those mines of martyrs' dust will be more precious far than the silver lodes they have replaced ; and, by the grace of God, I resolved to strive before I died to see in that town of 16,000 souls a church of living men once more on the face of the earth, above that great congregation sleeping in Jesus. A priest of the town has renounced Popery and left the place, but desires to return and preach Christ and him crucified.

## CHAPTER VI.

### LIGHT DAWNING THROUGH THE DARKNESS.

Through three tongues yet heart touching heart—Two hundred Roman  
Catholic children offered for instruction—The pitmen of Bohemia.

sameness of thought and word hurtful to ourselves, and through us to our hearers.

But the Lord helped us throughout ; he was before us, with us, and after us. There was a marked religious tenderness and impression in the people wherever we visited ; light was rising through the shadow of death. It was easy to touch even the natural feelings in a land of martyrs, in a people who are only now emerging into religious liberty, and who have never been allowed to forget that their fathers suffered for the name of Jesus longer and more severely than any other people except the Waldenses ; and with no Alpine strongholds for a refuge, but driven to hills, forests, and pits, or privileged with banishment, or crushed in the bosom of a populous country. It was easy to awaken the national sympathies between the land of Knox and the land of Huss ; and to pass from the memory of martyrs to Him who gave his own life for them and for us, to speak of the Spirit that testifies of Jesus, of the Christian life and work which also bear witness, and of the great brotherhood in Christ. But we had neither set speeches nor topics. The call to speak seemed somehow to come unexpectedly ; yet although three of us spoke in succession, the words of each always fitted in with the words of the others, and the whole was entirely free and natural. The thoughts were felt to be given by the Spirit at the moment, and heart touched heart as if no foreign tongue intervened. Where there was a pastor, either he or one of his elders addressed us in reply ; but more commonly there was no pastor for the place, and the address was given by one of the leading men in name of the rest.

Surrounded as they are with influences of a contrary character, it appeared to us impossible to over-estimate the benefit to be looked for, at such a time as this, from intercourse with Christians from more favoured lands, but most of

all when the Lord himself is sensibly in that intercourse. Our own feelings corresponded with those of one brother beloved who insisted on accompanying us for several hours from his own home till he gave us in charge to the next pastor. We reminded him that he should have to return all that way he was driving with us, and that it was Saturday. He answered, "It will be easy to preach to-morrow; my heart is full, and cannot but overflow." So we found for ourselves in all these interviews, that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth was speaking. Often the most affecting part of them was the earnest closing request, "Pray for us in England and in Scotland;" and we would now bear those messages from many of the churches there to the churches and the Christians here. Not the least touching of these requests was from the lips of a minister in the flower and strength of youth, who accompanied us to the train, and in closing the carriage-door whispered the words, "Pray for me, for I am very weak."

One out of many instances of the opening of the country to the Word of God was in Raudnitz, a town of 9000 inhabitants, within a few miles of Pastor Schubert's church. The incident that occurred just before our visit referred to the children; but it was merely following up what had already been done for the parents. That children under seven years of age can be guilty of no evil that will annul the grace of baptism, I have always understood to be held among Roman Catholics; but was ignorant that some of them were likewise not afraid of their children in infancy imbibing a teaching different from that of their own Church. But the Roman Catholic mayor of this town offered to make over the poor children of the place, more than two hundred in number, to the care of the Protestant pastor till they were six years of age.

A year before there was no Protestant meeting-place in the town ; when the pastor was asked by an English friend if it was contrary to law, he answered—No, not now, but it would create a commotion ; and he had shrunk from the attempt. Taking courage, he applied for a lease of a saloon that had been used for dancing ; and the Roman Catholic owner, when warned that it was to be used for preaching the gospel, answered that he would give it all the more willingly. It was fitted up with a pulpit and benches for four or five hundred hearers. The Roman Catholic magistrate came in his robes and with his officials to the opening, and now offers the poor children of the town for instruction. The place will make an excellent infant school, with side rooms for the teachers to live in ; and when the pastor said that if he could depend on £25, he would engage two teachers and begin at once, we could not but pledge ourselves to help him, trusting to the liberality of friends at home. Bible seeds sown in infant minds often take deep and everlasting root, especially in a time of blessing ; and those children coming daily to the school may learn to come also on the Sabbath.

In two of the meetings already referred to there was a large amount of singing. This was to be expected in the young women and girls of whom one of the audiences was chiefly composed ; but the earnest and prolonged singing of the men, who alone met us from the other congregation, brought out the hereditary delight of the Bohemians in the singing of psalms. It is interesting and rather surprising to learn that in the Czech language, so little known out of the country, there exist about five thousand hymns. Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs must have been a singular solace in those days when the Bohemian brethren were called by the nickname of the "Pit-men" (*Gruben-heimer*) ; because, besides the hills and forests, their chief refuge was in caves



and pits. "They wandered about, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy); they wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." In retreating to their caves through the snow, they trod carefully in each other's steps and the last of the party brushed over the single line of footprints with the branch of a beech-tree. Those pits must have resounded with many a sweet song of Zion written in the heart, when their light was too faint for reading the verses; for their occupants sat in darkness by day, not daring then to kindle a fire lest its smoke should betray their hiding-place. But as soon as they were screened by the curtain of night they lighted their fires, gathered round them to read the Book of God, taught, strengthened, and comforted each other, till they became both wise unto salvation and singularly well instructed in the Scriptures. When they ventured to meet together to drink the Cup of Blessing, it was in the depths of the forest, with sentinels placed at various points to watch against surprise, lest their blood should be mingled with their sacrifices. These were the days of suffering and of patience and of prayer; and now the prayers of the fathers seem ready to descend in a shower of blessing on the children, if labourers were sent forth everywhere to scatter the living seed on a land through which the ploughshare has passed so deeply.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE JEWS IN BOHEMIA.

Sermon in Prague to two hundred Jews—Their deep interest in hearing—  
Many Jews throughout Bohemia.

"FATHER FORGIVE THEM, FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO," we heard uttered in the hearing of two hundred sons of the circumcision, who were listening with deep emotion to this prayer on their behalf from the dying agonies of Him whom their fathers nailed to the tree. It was in their Oxford, in the city of Prague, once famed for its Rabbinical lore, and still boasting nine synagogues. The Jews shrink from Rome with her idols; they dislike the cross, and still more the crucifix; but the Book and the Cup seemed not to scare them from the house of God; and of all ranks and ages, mostly men, they gathered to hear one of their own brethren preach to them Jesus as the only "name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." The preacher, Abraham (brother to the late well-known Ridley) Herschell, addressed them from the words, "My brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh; who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever." He spoke of Israel the most privileged of all

nations, not for their own sake, for they were both few in number and hard in heart, but for the world's sake, that in the seed of Abraham "all the families of the earth might be blessed;" and of this promise having been fulfilled in no sense except through the gospel, and in no man except in Jesus of Nazareth, the greatest both of all Jews and of all men, whose brief ministry of three years and a half had changed the whole history of the world.

Throughout the sermon the congregation were riveted, not in anger, not in sorrow, not in conviction, but with their whole faculties absorbed, and in some of them with an interest so intense as if their eyes would literally leap from their sockets to pierce the preacher's inmost thoughts. But when he passed from the life of Jesus to his death, from Galilee to Calvary, the tenderness of deep feeling filled the assembly; and when, with much fervour, he repeated Christ's dying prayer, "FATHER FORGIVE THEM, FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO," a thrill of emotion ran throughout those sons of Judah; and we could have thought for the moment that they would choose their Messiah's blessing instead of their fathers' curse.

One view more the preacher in closing ventured briefly to open. Life is precious to the Jew; suicide is seldom known among them; the dread of death is deep and universal. To this fear he tenderly appealed, showed them how triumphantly it was taken away in Christ, and ended with the words, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law: but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Many of them had stood during the whole sermon; none had left; and now a loud murmur of earnest remark ran from mouth to mouth, reminding us vividly of the scene at Rome after Paul's discourse, "when

the Jews departed and had great reasoning among themselves."

That sermon alone seemed an ample reward for all the distance we had travelled, and more than confirmed what we had both heard and seen elsewhere, that the Jews will readily come to hear a stranger. When we were in Pesth, twenty-five Jews (unconverted) came to hear an English sermon. In Bohemia we saw several times the readiness of the Jews to mingle with our little congregations; in one assembly of fifty, nearly all were Roman Catholics, two were Protestants, and four were Jews. The Rabbi of a Jewish village had given the synagogue to the Prussian soldiers for Protestant worship; we were told that if we asked he would probably give the use of it again; and we now hear that the Jews are showing favour to a new Protestant place of meeting. A hall for worship recently opened in one of the towns was specially interesting as the scene of the brief labours of Mr. Spoudill, who had studied here for a year. There are 800 Jews in the town, and his mingled tenderness and zeal were singularly fitted to win them; but it has rather pleased the Lord to take him home into Abraham's bosom. He is succeeded by another, we trust to reap where he had just begun to sow. In the town where Mr. Dusek, another of our students in Scotland, has been labouring for a year, there are 2000 Jews, a number of whom come to listen when they expect the text to be taken from the Old Testament.

From what we saw for ourselves, we were thoroughly satisfied that, however far the Jews may be from conversion to Christ, they are at present in many places not hard of access for the preaching of the gospel. There are two requisites for conversion and no more, the Word and the Spirit. When they have the gospel and hear it, these two are reduced to one; the Spirit alone is needed, and the Spirit is promised to

prayer. A preacher sent to our various stations from time to time for one or two Sabbaths would be sure to attract a large congregation of Jews, and would, by the blessing of God, communicate an impulse to be followed by our stated missionaries. If we had the means, the men are not wanting for such a work. In Prague we need also schools as in Pesth, and converted Jews as assistant missionaries.

In Bohemia we met on the railways fewer priests of Rome than we may now meet in travelling in Scotland; but Jews we met constantly both in the trains and in the coffee-rooms, and were interested with Mr. Herschell's quick eye for one of his "kinsmen according to the flesh;" as indeed he had a quick perception in everything that pertained to missionary work. Usually he had no uncertainty about one of his brethren, and without moving his face would turn his eye gently toward us and then to our fellow-traveller to give us the information. When Jews meet each other and are in doubt, they quietly utter the word *Jehuda* (Jew) as if speaking to no one; if the word is given back they recognise each other, and if not it remains as if unspoken. But such a recognition between our friend and one of his nation was sometimes followed by strange and suspicious glances toward us, as much as to ask how a Jew happened to have not only Christian but clerical companions. In one of the saloons we were attracted by a family group of Jews and Jewesses, and amused with their great hilarity over a very simple joke which one of them was reading from a newspaper; and we learned what was new to us, that the Jews as a nation are fond of humour, and that this feature in their character has helped them to endure their long oppression.

Bohemia is a land of martyrs, and a land full of Jews. The souls of Christ's slaughtered witnesses for five hundred years are now rising from the dead, from the flames, from the

scaffolds, from the mines, from the floods, from the battle-fields ; and why should not the Jews at such a time share in the national blessing, and awake also out of their long sleep ? On the other hand, the last drops of the blood that has rested on Israel for eighteen hundred years are hasting to be conveyed from Jerusalem to Rome. The downfall of Antichrist and the ingathering of Israel have always been expected as events nearly synchronous. Rome is now "exalting her gate," and so "seeking destruction ;" the blood of all the saints from Abel to our blessed Lord came down upon Jerusalem ; but when "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, in *her* will be found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of *all* that were slain upon the earth." When Rome shall have finally crucified Christ afresh, and taken his blood upon herself, the blood of sprinkling will speak for Zion better things than that of Abel, and her sins and iniquities will be remembered no more. Let us arise and prepare her people to meet their God returning to her in mercy, and betrothing her again in everlasting loving kindness. Let us specially remember the Jews on their own Sabbath, on the Friday evening or the Saturday morning, that the veil may be taken from their hearts while they read Moses and the prophets in their synagogues.

These words were written before the Pope had decreed himself infallible ; by that blasphemous decree he has now finally seated himself on the throne of the Most High God ; he has prepared himself for his last struggle, and God appears to be hastening his final overthrow. Jerusalem may now lift up her head, for the day of her redemption draweth nigh.

The Rev. Dr. Schwartz was appointed to preach to the Jews in Prague and elsewhere this autumn, but was kept at home by the war, and suddenly called from his many labours on earth to his rest in heaven.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE BURGOMASTER'S DAUGHTER.

The Burgomaster of Leitmeritz in 1421—His only daughter—Her husband with twenty-three others sentenced to death—Her noble effort to save him—Protestant worship now opened in the town.

"FATHER, you will never wed me to another," was the weeping but resolute reply of the daughter of the Burgomaster of Leitmeritz to the relentless judge, who had sentenced his own son-in-law to death for having claimed his divine right to read the Book of Life and to drink the Cup of salvation. At a later period the people of that town erected an outstanding and a singular protest against Rome withholding the cup in the Lord's Supper by building a church in the form of a cup. But the present narrative dates within seven years after the burning of Huss, when a fiery persecution raged through Bohemia, and bribes were given for the conviction of his followers, five florins for a priest and one florin for a layman; "which," in the words of an old narrator, "was the cause of horrid butchery." "Hold yourself in readiness to die for the communion of the cup," wrote Huss to one of his friends from his prison in Constance shortly before his death; and by grace thousands were made willing and ready to shed their blood for that cup which set forth and sealed the atoning blood of the Lamb of God.

The town of Leitmeritz is in the district of our friend

Pastor Schubert and not very far from Raudnitz ; but there had been no opening last summer for the gospel within its walls, and we did not visit it. It is situate on the right bank of the Elbe, at some distance from the river, which has for long been crossed by a bridge, but was then passed over by ferry boats. It is an important county town, well-built and fortified ; it is still the seat of high ecclesiastical dignitaries, with its cathedral, episcopal palace, and numerous churches ; and its burgomaster then possessed the power of life and death over the citizens. His name was Pichel, a judge who feared not God nor regarded man, noted for perfidy and cruelty, full of hatred to the truth, and bent on pleasing the Emperor Sigismund, or the priests who moved the Emperor to quench the light of the gospel in the blood of thousands of its witnesses. For Sigismund's conscience was more tender than theirs ; when they had persuaded him to break the safe-conduct granted to Huss he is said to have blushed as he took the pen to sign his death-warrant ; and that warning was forgotten by the priests of another generation, but remembered by another Emperor, Charles v., when they urged him to give Luther into their hands, and he returned the memorable reply so salutary for all against an hour of temptation, That he did not wish to blush like Sigismund.

Pichel had one only daughter, whose character bore a bright contrast to his own : marked by singular affection, by tenderness, courage, and heroic devotedness, and by divine grace at the root of all ; for in her efforts to save her husband's life she did not once suggest to him the hope of escaping death by retracting his testimony for Christ. Her husband was worthy of her and of the Lord who had bought them both. At once loving and loveable this noble confessor must have been to attract so intense a devotion to himself ; yet as a loyal follower of their one Redeemer, her sorrow



only drew from him words of exhortation and encouragement to stand fast in the faith after his decease.

Suddenly during the night of 29th May 1421, the Burgomaster, or Consul as he was then called, seized twenty-four of the leading and most respected citizens of Leitmeritz, who sought their souls' salvation by following the word of God rather than the will of man, and threw them into the prison of the city tower. His son-in-law was one of the number, seized without warning and dragged from the arms of his devoted wife. The Burgomaster seems at first not to have matured his plan of procedure with the prisoners, and left them in the deep dungeon till they were half dead with hunger and cold. But he took counsel with the officers of the Imperial troops, and at length had them brought out into the court-house under a guard of soldiers. He then condemned them all to death, and ordered that horses should at once be harnessed, and the prisoners placed on carts, taken down to the Elbe, bound hand and foot, and thrown into the river. While the trial, or rather the condemnation, was proceeding, a great concourse of people had assembled to watch the issue; the wives, the children, the kinsfolk, and the friends of the prisoners were clustered round them. The personal grief of a hundred hearts, each broken by its own calamity, was enhanced by the common sorrow of all, and the air was rent by a loud wail of lamentation, mourning, and woe.

But now, with a purpose that will not be turned aside, there is seen pressing through the crowd, in the wild grief of youth, one to whom all give place. It is the only daughter of the Burgomaster. Many an unuttered prayer is breathing now for the success of her suit; for what parent can be so dead to natural affection as to be unmoved by such a sorrow; and who can tell if her power over the one will, on whom every life depends, may not yet be blessed for the deliverance

of all? She rushes into her father's presence, weeping and wringing her hands, throws herself down at his feet, and with the soft tongue that breaks the bone pleads for her husband's life. Cold and hard as a stone, the Burgomaster sneers at the grief of his child, and sits unmoved as a statue. She continues to entreat, but he bids her spare her tears, tells her that she knows not what she asks, and offers to find her a better husband. "Father," she firmly replies, "you will never wed me to another," and rises to overtake the crowd who are already accompanying the soldiers with their prisoners to the river side. Following the mingled concourse of executioners, martyrs, and mourners, smiting her breast and tearing her hair, she presents a touching spectacle of grief even to those who are sinking under their own sorrows.

When they reached the banks of the river, the prisoners were taken down from the carts, and each one securely fastened; both hands and feet were bound, and hand and foot bound together. The ferry-boats were got ready, not this time to cross the fair river with cheerful passengers for the further side, but to carry their living freight into the midst of the dark Jordan, sorrowful yet triumphant over the last enemy. There had been no preparation, so that all this occupied some time, and the martyrs seized the opportunity for prayer to God and testimony to men. With loud voices they called heaven and earth to witness their innocence; they took their final farewell of their wives, their children, and their friends; they exhorted them to constancy and zeal, and moved them to cleave to the Word of God and not to the inventions of men; last of all, they prayed for their enemies and commended their own souls to God. They were then placed in the boats, brought out to the middle of the river, and thrown helpless into the stream. The banks were lined with officers armed with iron pitchforks, who stabbed such as

were carried by the current and floated half dead to the shores. So sank those noble martyrs beneath the flood, those twenty-four steadfast confessors ; "they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and they loved not their lives unto the death ; the waters overwhelmed them, the stream went over them, the proud waters went over their soul," and the enemy and the avenger triumphed haughtily. Yet in the great world unseen "death was swallowed up in victory ; even then the Lord was a stay unto them ; He sent from above, he took them, he drew them out of many waters ; he brought them forth into a large place ; he delivered them because he delighted in them : " He put a new song into their mouth for ever, a song of salvation to God and to the Lamb.

But before the conflict was thus ended, the suppliant who had pressed through the crowd to the feet of a cruel father in the judgment-hall, was seen again pressing to the river's brink to look for the last time on the face of the beloved husband of her youth. Having singled him out from the others struggling together in the stream, she fastened her eyes intently on him with the eagerness of a last sad look that could not be satisfied with looking, and plunged into the river in a desperate effort to save his life. It might be from the irresistible impulse of the moment, but it appears rather to have been of deliberate purpose, in the hope of being able to drag him to the shore, and of finding the soldiers more pitiful than her father, and so delivering him from death ; regardless of the risk to her own life, which she counted not dear to herself for the faintest hope of saving his. But the waters were too deep, she sank beneath them in the bold attempt, and rose choking to the surface. "But love is strong as death : many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it." She now tried to loose the cords that bound his hands ; but the executioners had done their work too well, and she had

not strength to undo the fastenings. Baffled in every effort for her husband's life, the heroic woman had no heart to struggle now for her own; she threw her arms around him and clasped him in a last embrace, and they sank together to rise no more. "They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in death they were not divided."

To the twenty-four martyrs of the Elbe there was thus added a twenty-fifth, according to the divine reckoning, "partly whilst ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used." Next day the two bodies were found in the river locked in each other's arms, in faithfulness unto death; they were taken up and buried in one grave. Not long after, the story of this martyrdom was engraved in letters of gold on the wall of one of the churches of Leitmeritz, and cut on a tablet of stone at one of the principal gates of the town. These memorials remained uninjured for two hundred years, but were effaced at the great suppression of the gospel in the beginning of the Thirty Years' War. From that date, for the last two centuries and a half, the silver trumpet of jubilee has never been sounded in this city, the glad news of a free redemption never heard within its walls, and the cup of salvation never offered to its people.

But now within the last twelve months there has come at length the dawning of a new day after so dark a night. Leitmeritz, closed so long to the message of the gospel, a stronghold of the Church of Rome, and one of the chief seats of its ecclesiastical dignitaries, is now opening her gates to the messengers of grace through righteousness unto eternal life. A sensation had been created in the town by one of the higher clergy publishing a book on the present state of the Church. "Soon after this event," writes the Rev. Mr.

Van Andel, "we were invited to commence Protestant worship, Roman Catholics as well as Protestants wishing us to come. Some highly respectable Roman Catholic gentlemen even placed themselves at the head of the movement. Consequently I visited Leitmeritz, hired a hall, and made the necessary arrangements, and towards the close of last year Pastor Schubert and myself conducted the opening services, which were very numerous attended, and even by some of the highest authorities of the place. In this most interesting and important town, services are now held regularly twice a month, and on each occasion not only a forenoon and afternoon diet of worship takes place, but also a Bible-class for students."

Let us aid with our prayers this most hopeful return and entrance of the gospel into Leitmeritz; and who can tell if that old story of glorious martyrdom may not be written again on tables of stone, and in letters of gold in that ancient town, and the older and better story of the gospel itself written on the tablets of many hearts by the finger of God

## CHAPTER IX.

### OUR LAST DAY IN THE LAND OF HUSS.

The Mushroom Hill—The famine of the Word—Messengers for the gospel—Congregation of Roman Catholics.

"WE shall plant ourselves here," was the oracular word of the first Bohemian chief when he sought a home for his soldiers and his people ; and he struck his flag-staff into the turf on the top of the Hill Rip, or the Mushroom Hill, so called from its circular form rising mushroom-like out of an elevated plain, very much as the island called the Dutchman's Hat rests upon our Western Ocean. The standard erected was not that of the Cross, for the nation was still heathen; and in planting themselves there they little thought how great things they were to suffer for the name of Christ. The hill is within a mile of the church, manse, school, and orphanage of our host, Pastor Schubert. The eye of the Czech leader rested on a magnificent country, varied with hill and dale and river, and embracing a long stretch of the beautiful valley of the Elbe, with the noble barrier of the range of the Saxon mountains on the north.

In this direction we drove for three hours with Mr. Schubert toward the outskirts of his extensive parish ; a pleasant drive through large orchards of plums, through forests of Scotch firs, through sandy plains in water eighteen inches deep, and between fields ploughed by muzzled oxen.

We crossed the Elbe in a ferry-boat, moving along a chain which moored it to a point a quarter of a mile up the river, and was supported by a picturesque line of eleven boats or canoes. After crossing the river we passed through an agricultural village of five hundred Jews, and came in sight of our destination, Zebus, like a city set on a hill, to which our road took a wide circuit through fields filled with reapers in the labours and the joy of harvest. It is a pleasant village, with excellent gardens surrounding the houses. In this respect its character was different from that of the other stations, which were usually in towns of considerable size. It is to the towns, not only as the most important in themselves, but as the most destitute of the means of grace, that the efforts of the Bohemian Church are now directed ; but the call from this village was so evidently of God that it

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mains in this northern district of the land ; and the exiled Moravians at Herrnhut not only welcomed the Bohemians on the Sabbath, but fed the flame by scattering the Book of Life among the people. The village of Zebus was too far from the border to admit of this Protestant communion across it, and its inhabitants were Roman Catholic and did not court such intercourse ; yet they had probably not been left entirely without the testimony of the Word.

Six months before our visit, Pastor Schubert was preaching at the new station in the town of Raudnitz, at nearly three hours' distance, when eight of the hearers remained after the service, and asked him to preach at Zebus. Supposing them to be Protestants, and learning that they lived within his wide bounds, he cheerfully consented. When he went, he found a crowd waiting for him ; but was surprised and perplexed to find that they were all Roman Catholics, to whom he was not entitled to preach. Some of them assured him that he need have no difficulty on that account, as they had been studying the Bible, and were prepared to declare themselves Protestants ; but when he had begun he was interrupted by the police, because it was unlawful to preach in the streets. He asked who would give him a house, and being welcomed into one, which was instantly overcrowded, he got the windows opened and preached, it was said, to about a thousand hearers. The owner of the house had his name written on a black board by the head-man of the village, and was fined five florins for listening to the gospel before formally becoming a Protestant ; but he rejoiced to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus.

Notice of our coming had been sent only a few hours before to such as were willing to leave the harvest-field ; and we found a company of fifty assembled to receive us. "We welcome you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," they



said, as we entered ; and we rejoiced to be received under no narrower banner. There were only two Protestants present. One young man stood at the door, listening with deep interest ; his black hair and handsome Semitic face plainly told his nation ; and there were three other Jews in the room. The rest were mostly middle-aged men, but mingled with old men and women ; and were all Roman Catholics, either recently converted, or now desiring to embrace the gospel. They said that except for the harvest there would have been hundreds to meet us.

Joseph Crist, in whose house we were met, was the name honoured upon the head-man's black board. He had given the room freely ; the people had fitted it with benches ; and the one half of his house had been transformed into a church, for the benches rendered it useless for any other purpose. His whole language and appearance agreed with his willing sacrifice, and marked him as an intelligent, loving, earnest Christian. He not only offered his house for the gospel, but received us with a plenteous hospitality. There were no elders, and the people were thankful to hear a sermon once in six weeks. But our landlord read a sermon on the other Sabbaths ; and he with eight or ten others had formed themselves into a committee instead of a kirk-session. Any Roman Catholic of good character, who desired to be numbered civilly amongst the Protestants, was encouraged and welcomed by them so far. But they did not hold him entitled by this legal transference to be a member of their communion, and would not transfer his name to their church-roll till they were satisfied regarding his religious knowledge and consistent profession. These leading men remained and conversed with us at the close of the meeting, Joseph Crist acting as their spokesman in the more formal responses.

This was our last day of such work in Bohemia, and the

whole scene was deeply affecting. Our previous and deeply interesting intercourse had been not solely, yet chiefly, with Protestants; first with the pastors in Prague; and then with what in Scotland would be kirk-sessions, dotting the country at wide intervals, without shepherds and without folds, and struggling to keep the little flocks around them. We could not meet those men without remembering their martyr-fathers; and the names of Huss and Knox were mutual watchwords that unlocked both their hearts and ours.

But in this assembly, although in such a land inquirers soon serve themselves heirs to their witnessing forefathers, we all felt that these references would be premature, and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ himself was the one and only chord that was used to touch every heart. And truly we found his name to be "as ointment poured forth," and its fragrance filled the house. The people drank in every word with intense emotion, and with tears glistening in every eye; and we all found it hard to bear up under the sensible interchange of Christian love, of love new and fresh to them, and awakening new love in us. The sight of those earnest men, who had all either lately escaped, or were now fleeing for refuge from the bondage of sin and the snares of Popery, renewed our gratitude for our own salvation; they understood us, and we understood them; we knew their hearts, and they knew ours; and the one language of heaven formed a link between us which no division of earthly tongues was able to break, or even to mar. The one obedience, the one sacrifice, the one priesthood, the one mediation of Jesus Christ, their one Lord and ours, the witness of his Spirit, the liberty of his people, the fruit and testimony of a loving and holy life, the privilege of winning others to the Saviour, all led to the many mansions in the Father's house where we and they trusted to meet again and go no more out.

This village of Zebus has now a Protestant hall of its own, capable of holding about three hundred. Joseph Crist, who looks thirty-five years of age, and another devoted man from a neighbouring village have since our visit been preparing themselves for catechists, and have now received a Government license as colporteurs. The Rev. Mr. Bernard has been appointed assistant minister, and is proving himself a most earnest and self-sacrificing labourer. On the day of his arrival a Roman Catholic gentleman sent his carriage for him to the railway station, two or three hours' distance. At the opening of the hall, which was crowded to the utmost, Pastor Schubert and our missionary, Mr. Van Andel, admitted between thirty and forty converts from Popery, after a very careful examination. There are sixty such communicants now; and if we include the surrounding villages, it may be said that the Lord is "adding to the Church daily such as shall be saved." In those villages the sub-pastor is spending both his strength and his scanty income in a manner which if known would call forth a cordial response from Christians in other lands.

Everywhere throughout Bohemia the Protestant people and their pastors are very poor; almost everywhere there is a great work to be done with such a promise of fruit as will be found in few other places; and if we render a seasonable aid to the work we may look for the blessing that belongs to those who "sow beside all waters."

# STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED FOR BOHEMIA

*From 1st October 1869 to 1st October 1870.*

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The Right Hon. Lord Polwarth, . . . . .	£10	0	0
A Friend, . . . . .	100	0	0
— Harwood, Esq., Tuddenham Hall, Ipswich, . . . . .	5	0	0
Miss Bruce, Kennet, . . . . .	2	0	0
Mrs. Perston, 1 Ladbroke Gardens, Kensington, . . . . .	1	0	0
Mrs. Buchanan, 15 Park Circus, Glasgow, . . . . .	1	0	0
Miss Mackenzie, 16 Moray Place, Edinburgh, . . . . .	1	0	0
Misses Macfarlane, 4 Park Place, . . . . .	1	0	0
Miss Harriet Gordon, 2 Clarendon Crescent, . . . . .	0	10	0
Miss Angus, . . . . .	0	2	6
Samuel Whittaker, Esq., Derby, . . . . .	1	2	6
Miss Egglestone, Rev. G. Baxter, Mrs. Washington Pike, do., . . . . .	2	2	0
A Gentleman at Derby, . . . . .	1	0	0
A Friend, . . . . .	0	2	0
A Friend, Skye, . . . . .	0	5	0
Samuel Hanson, Esq., 24 Granville Place, Kilburn, N.W., . . . . .			
London, . . . . .	5	0	0
Miss Matilda Hall, 16 Cambridge Square, London, W., . . . . .	1	0	0
Collection in Free St. Luke's Church (including £10 from . . . . .			
Misses Manson, 47 Queen Street), . . . . .	33	18	6
Mrs. Shepherd, 15 Charlotte Square, . . . . .	5	0	0
Misses Ker, 28 Rutland Square, . . . . .	15	0	0
Collection in Presbyterian Church, Hampstead, . . . . .	35	17	6
Friend, by Rev. John Macfarlane, Greenock, . . . . .	1	0	0
Collection in Barclay Church, . . . . .	31	3	6
Collection by Rev. J. Urr Wilson in Dunse U.P. Church, . . . . .	5	7	3½
Miss Milliken, Huntly Place, Rothesay, . . . . .	5	0	0
Mr. John Hunter, Pathead, New Cumnock, . . . . .	1	0	0
Miss Christina Bruce, . . . . .	0	4	0

Major-General Dalzell,	5	0	0
Miss Murray Gartshore,	0	10	0
Mr. Duncan Morrison, Lynedoch Place,	0	1	0
Hon. Arthur Kinnaird, London,	20	0	0
Miss Haldane's Bible Class,	0	5	0
Friend in Highlands,	1	0	0
Friend in Dundee,	0	2	0
Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm of Burnfoot,	3	0	0
Miss Margaret M'Caul,	0	5	0
<b>By British Herald,</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Mr. Caird's Lecture on Palestine in Grange Church,</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Free St. Luke's Sabbath School,</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Edinburgh Juvenile Missionary Association,</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>A Newhaven Fisherman,</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>A Friend,</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>By the Rev. J. H. Wilson,</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Mrs. Swan,</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>A Friend,</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Rev. A. Stuart, Kilmarty,</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>E. C.,</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Rev. John Munro, Nova Scotia,</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Mrs. Williamson, 4 Mayfield Terrace, London,</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Edward Whitock, Esq., Newhall,</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>A Friend,</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Chas. G. Parker, Esq., 13 Milk Street, London, E.,</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>A Friend,</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>A Friend,</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>£330</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>

## TRANSMITTED TO BOHEMIA.

Zebus,	£50	0	0
Two Colporteurs for the district.	50	0	0
Nymburg,	100	0	0
Prelate,	50	0	0
Nachod,	50	0	0
Miss Kaspar's School,	30	0	0
Balance in hand,	0	7	8

The sums transmitted to Bohemia have been partly what was promised by Mr. Wilson of the Barclay Church and myself, and the rest has been allotted in concert with Dr. Blackwood and Mr. Herschell. My own thought was out of these contributions to give smaller sums to a larger number of places, but they had a larger amount to dispose of, and judged it more convenient to assign what I have received as stated above.

For a number of years Bohemia will require to be largely helped by friends in Britain if its open door for the Gospel is to be effectually entered; for the Reformed Churches are extremely poor, and the pastors are overburdened with the efforts they are making. Larger sums are required for the purchase of halls or places of worship in the towns, and smaller annual sums for the support of assistant pastors till they are regularly settled, and for the support of teachers in schools.

The readers of this Statement are respectfully referred to my *Visit to the Land of Huss*, just published by Messrs. Nisbet and Co., London, and Mr. Maclaren, Edinburgh. The reason why the names of places are given sparingly in that account is because religious liberty in Bohemia is so recent, and perhaps not yet finally established. Contributions of any amount I shall most thankfully receive and transmit to Bohemia.

A. MOODY STUART.

43 QUEEN STREET, EDINBURGH,  
October 1870.

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### RAPID PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL.

The following letter from Mr. Herschell, of 6th October 1870, has come to me after the *Visit to the Land of Huss* was printed, but I add it on account of its remarkable interest:—

“You remember I told you that I secured a dear brother, Karafiat, to fill the pulpit at Raudnitz. His letters have endeared this man to me more than I can express; they breathe such a spirit of devotion, fine, gentle, manly, and modest spirit, that I always feel the better for reading them; but unfortunately he writes like a thorough master of the German language, and the beautiful, exquisite touches of thought and feeling which pervade the letters are not translatable. I will, however, just give you the pith of his first report, which came last

week. His services at Raudnitz are well attended, he has established regular religious instruction for the Protestant children of the town and neighbourhood, which afford him much joy. But now comes the best part of the story. Many miles from Raudnitz there is a town of the name of Lany, or Laun, with a population of 21,000, which was entirely Protestant in 1620, but was in that year burnt down by the Romanists, and since then no Protestant worship has existed there. A few weeks ago some Catholics from this place applied to Karafiat to come and preach in their town, promising to meet all expenses in hiring a hall, and assuring him that many in that town are longing to hear the Word. A preliminary conference meeting was arranged in a village in the direction of Lany, and on arriving at the house, which was full of Romanists, the master of the house being himself one, an open Bible lay on the table, the people looking for edification. The people all agreed that Lany would be the most central place to preach in, a day was fixed for the first service, and a hall hired. On the Saturday before Karafiat received a telegram telling him not to come, as the service could not be held. He telegraphed back that he must go, as he had given up the service at Raudnitz on their account; he received another telegram not to come. Karafiat was much distressed, and resolved to hire a conveyance for Lany. On arriving at the place he went to the person who telegraphed to him (a Roman Catholic) to ascertain the cause, and was informed that the people who had arranged the service had intended to give him a public reception in the town, as the first Protestant preacher who was to appear there since 1620, but that the Commandant had publicly announced that he forbade the service as illegal. Karafiat ascertained that there were three Protestants in the town, and knew that since 1866 the law was on his side, he therefore went to the Commandant and explained to him that he would hold the service, and was justified in doing so by the new law. The official confessed that he was not acquainted with the law, and would therefore at once telegraph to Prague for authority. He did so, and received the reply that he must put no hindrance in the way of such a service; that it was quite legal. Upon this Karafiat made it known that he would preach the next day, inviting the Commandant to be present. They had a beautiful hall, but could only furnish the ladies with seats, as it was late on Saturday when the answer came. About 300 of most devout hearers assembled, and the Commandant amongst them. 'Never,' says Karafiat, 'shall I forget the thrilling Amen of the whole assembly when I concluded my discourse.'

"The next service was to be held last Sunday, and I am curious to hear the result. I long to see Bohemia again, for the Lord has opened a wide door there."

*BY THE REV. A. MOODY STUART.*

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